

Testimony regarding HB 5078

I am writing in support of House Bill 5078. In my thirty-three years of teaching, I have never felt so unprepared to implement state requirements. The district in which I teach, Manchester, has done a reasonable job providing us with background knowledge of Common Core. We have been given limited opportunities to familiarize ourselves with the standards. We have designed lessons to implement **some** of them. And, many of the Individual Education Plans that I write for my special education students have Common Core goals and objectives. However, now we are about to test our students using an instrument and standards to which we have had limited exposure.

In addition, I am concerned about the level of technology being utilized in Manchester. Up to three-fifths of the students on the middle school team to which I am assigned will take the SBAC Field Test on a Netbook computer. The screens on these are only ten inches, measured diagonally. The English Language Arts test requires a student to read a passage on the left side, while questions are displayed on the right. The passage can be expanded, but then the questions are not visible. I have taken the practice test on a full sized desktop screen. It is difficult enough to navigate on a larger screen. Using the mini screen of a netbook will put my students at a disadvantage.

We, in the classrooms of Connecticut, have heard for several years that Common Core was to be implemented. Over those years, ample opportunity existed to systematically implement all the structures needed for success. That didn't happen. Too little has been done, too late to be successful. Please delay implementation of Common Core standards and Smarter Balanced testing until Connecticut's educators are prepared, and the required technology is available to all students.

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